

Fifteen Believed Dead, Scores Hurt, When Washington Theatre Roof Collapses Under Snow Load

Ten Known to Have Perished in Motion Picture House Crash in Fashionable Section of Capital

Police, Firemen and Marines Dig Into the Debris and Carry Out Victims

WASHINGTON, Jan. 28.—Fifteen persons at least are believed to have been killed and scores injured to-night in the collapse under the weight of two feet of snow of the roof of the Kuekerbocker Theater, motion picture house, located in the heart of Washington's fashionable Northwest section.

Two hours and a half after the crash, which occurred about 5 o'clock, definite information as to the number of dead and injured was wholly lacking, as well as estimates of the number of those in the theater at the time—these estimates ranging from 150 to 500, although the theater, one of the finest motion pictures houses in the city, had accommodations for more than 2,000 spectators.

At midnight the following partial list of dead was ascertained:

- Mrs. B. H. Covell.
- Miss Costley.
- William Tracy, a member of the orchestra.
- F. H. Earnest.
- Douglas Hillyer.
- Mrs. Marie Russell.
- W. S. Scofield, of Danville, Va.
- G. S. Freeman, musician.

Two dead were unidentified, one carrying an envelope with a Wardman Park Hotel return address directed to W. P. Straw, of Man-

Among the injured, according to reports to the police and hospitals, were Senator Smith, of South Carolina; Walter Urdy, M. E. Gastney, "Doc" Brown, of North Adams, Mass., a student at Georgetown University, fractured back; Mrs. Henry S. Powell, Henry T. Lacey, fractured ribs; J. L. Durland, cuts and bruises; Mrs. J. L. Durland, cuts and bruises; Noble Tommaso Azerto, third secretary of the Italian Embassy; E. J. Bowen, injuries serious; J. L. Bowen, injuries serious; Marie Rhea, John Klenner, Belle Renz, Hugh Nesbit, son of the Washington correspondent of "The Kansas City Star"; S. W. Richmond, Robert Williams.

A. Robertson, Joseph Klena, John Proke, all with minor phosno bruises; musician; Mertie Ann Crush, off at shoulder; G. Caplan, M. Gold, Hugh Glenn, Edward A. Williams, musician, broken leg; William Matciello, musician, arm amputated; Mary and Al Rogers, both with minor apartment injuries slight; Dr. Custin Lee Hall, fractured arm and his wife, dislocated shoulder, fractured arm and cuts about head; Miss Margaret Cole, fractured arm; Mrs. J. B. Taylor, James A. Curran, of Florence, Miss Helen Hopkins, S. M. Lee, Albert Sward, of Chicago, scalp wounds fractured skull; Miss Maclean White, broken leg; J. B. G. Custin, Dr. and Mrs. H. Alford, both with Underwood, slightly injured; Mrs. Mattie Schaub, slightly injured; Mrs. Mary Chalmers, slightly injured; Clarence Ceskiva, slightly injured; Mrs. Bernard Grossman, not at shoulder broken.

All Confusion for Hours

All was confusion for hours after the crash, while police, firemen, marines from the nearby barracks and soldiers from Walter Reed Military Hospital strove to burrow beneath the mass of debris and bring forth those buried thereunder.

Scores had been removed from the edges of the debris and hurried to hospitals, but police, engaged for twenty-four hours in battling the worst snow-storm to visit Washington in a decade, were unable to check up on the number of those taken to the hospitals or what or how or how many had died after reaching the hospital.

Every fire station in the city was called upon to send its crew to the scene and the collection of firefighting apparatus only added to the confusion.

With the arrival of the marines, however, order began to be restored.

Emergency hospitals were set in the neighborhood, some in the homes of high officials of the government.

Finding the tons of concrete and steel of the roof were almost immovable and unpenetrable, the street railway companies of the city and the Washington Navy Yard were called upon to supply acetylene torches. With these

Only Recently Inspected

Attaches of the British Embassy reported that the bodies of the three dead had been made of the staff of that embassy, and none found to have been in attendance at the theater. Belief was expressed in some quarters that the financial loss of injured and possibly that of the dead would be compensated by the known persons, inasmuch as the theater was situated in a section of the city in which many government officials live.

The management of the theater declared that the building only recently had been transferred and approved.